



FACT SHEET: The Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection & Restoration Act (CWPPRA) Program *Previously referred to as “Breaux Act”*

Need for a Restoration Program in Louisiana: Louisiana wetlands are unique & vital ecological assets worth saving – 40% of the continental US coastal wetlands are found in Louisiana. Louisiana is losing, on average, an acre of wetlands every 38 minutes. These wetlands act as storm buffers against hurricanes and act as flood control devices by holding excess floodwaters during high rainfall (like a sponge). They replenish aquifers, purify waters, and provide a habitat for various kinds of wildlife. Louisiana’s wetlands benefit humans by way of oil & gas production, shipping commerce, fisheries industries, fur harvesting, oyster production, recreation resources/ecotourism – providing billions of dollars in revenues for our nation.

How Restoration Need is Met: In 1990, Congress passed the Breaux Act (Public Law 101-646, Title III CWPPRA); it is authorized until 2019. By September 2014, 200 CWPPRA projects have been approved, 101 have been constructed, 18 are under construction, 31 are in the engineering & design phase, & 50 have been deauthorized or transferred to another program.

Purpose of CWPPRA: To plan, design, construct, maintain, & monitor coastal wetlands restoration projects that provide for the long-term conservation of wetlands & their dependent fish & wildlife populations in coastal Louisiana.

How CWPPRA is organized: CWPPRA is managed by a Task Force composed of the state of Louisiana (Governor’s Office of Coastal Activities) & 5 Federal agencies: the Environmental Protection Agency, Fish & Wildlife Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, & the US Army Corps of Engineers. Each Federal agency partners with the state to design & build coastal restoration projects developed from the parish level up. The Corps chairs the Task Force, the Technical Committee, & various other subcommittees & workgroups that include restoration professionals such as engineers, scientists, & academic representatives.

How it works: Projects are born through CWPPRA’s annual planning process called the “Priority Project List” or “PPL.” So far, 23 PPLs have been established & PPL 24 is currently underway. The process begins in January each year; CWPPRA Regional Planning Teams meet with parish residents to brainstorm & develop restoration projects for their areas - this local interaction is a fundamental concept of CWPPRA & the key 1st step to getting projects off the ground. As the year progresses, proposed projects are evaluated based on several factors and certain ones are selected for more review. Each parish has a voting representative & opportunity to work intimately with CWPPRA agencies & voice comments during CWPPRA’s public meetings. Proposed projects compete for limited annual funds. The Task Force makes the ultimate selection of projects for each PPL. Selections move to engineering & design (Phase 1) & later, if selected for Phase 2, advance to construction.

Why it works: For almost 20 years, CWPPRA had a consistent funding source from the Sport Fish Restoration & Boating Safety Trust Fund, with funding amounts ranging from about 30 M to 80 M each year. About 5 M of the annual funds are committed toward planning future projects; the majority of funds are used toward direct project implementation. The Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2012 (MAP-21) extends the Sport Fish Trust Fund and other Transportation Act items to the end of FY 2012. It was approved by Congress on June 29th and sent to the President on July 2nd. It includes the extension of the Sport Fish Restoration Act (Subtitle B), the RESTORE Act (Title III), and the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (Title IV), among others. The CWPPRA Program anticipates receiving about 78.2 M in Federal funds for FY15.

Restoration Techniques utilized: Freshwater Reintroduction, Outfall Management, Sediment Diversion, Dredged Material/Marsh Creation, Shoreline Protection, Sediment and Nutrient Trapping, Hydrologic Restoration, Marsh Management, Barrier Island Restoration, Vegetative Planting

Life Span of CWPPRA Project: CWPPRA projects are operated, maintained, & managed for 20 years.

CWPPRA Benefits: Physical land gains; model of interagency coordination, public education & participation; solid science foundation & background information that helped select LCA Feasibility Study Plan, Coastal Impact Assistance Program, State of Louisiana & Water Resource Development Act; long-term conservation of wetlands & dependent fish & wildlife populations

Take Away Point: CWPPRA continues to cost effectively address immediate restoration needs & to serve as the cornerstone of future programs contingent upon funding via future CRAs or Trust Fund appropriation reauthorization in Transportation Bill.

For more information, visit www.LAcoast.gov.